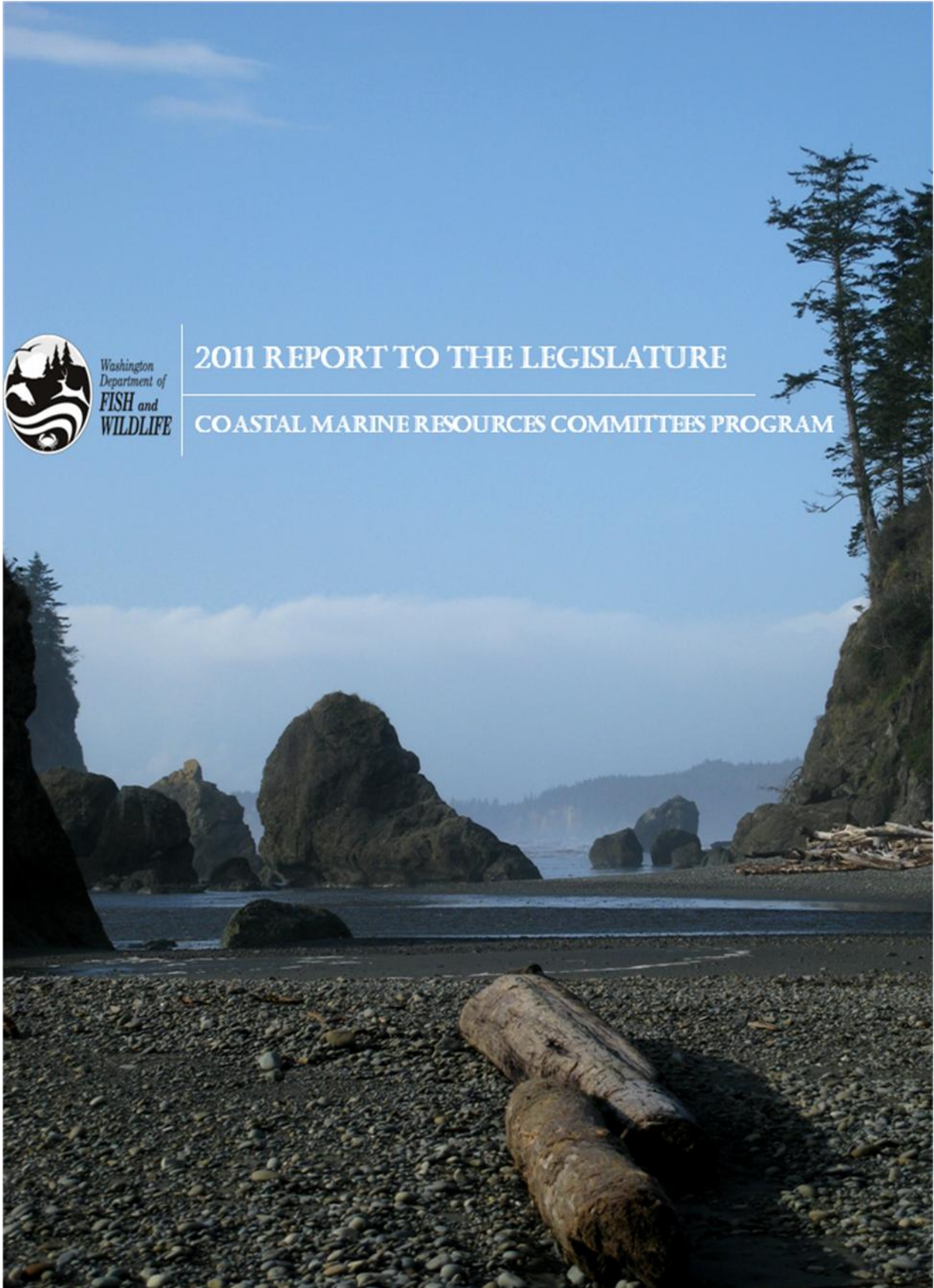




Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**

2011 REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

COASTAL MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEES PROGRAM



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report summarizes the hard work of Washington coastal residents who comprise the Marine Resource Committees (MRCs) in Coastal Washington and are supported by county and state staff. We would like to thank the people and organizations who have volunteered their time to organize and participate in the meetings, activities, and events reported on here. We acknowledge the coordinators of marine resource committees in each county for their organization, vision, dedication, and facilitation skills. Coordinators also provided summaries and pictures for sections of this report. Coordinators include: Rich Osborne (Clallam County), Tami Pokorny (Jefferson County), Garrett Dalan (Grays Harbor County), Mike Johnson (Pacific Conservation District), and Carrie Backman (WSU Wahkiakum County Extension). We would also like to thank Jennifer Hennessey (Washington Department of Ecology) for providing the summary on the formation of the Coastal Advisory Body.

We acknowledge the continued support of the Washington State Legislature and of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Michele Culver provided guidance in the development of the Coastal Marine Resources Committees Program. We would also like to recognize that sections of this report were originally written by F. Brie Van Cleve in the 2009 Report to the Legislature.

2011 Report to the Legislature
Coastal Marine Resources Committees Program
December 2011

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SUMMARY

Marine Resources Committees (MRCs) are county-based, volunteer committees that carry out local projects and activities and advise the county on issues pertaining to marine resources. MRCs are composed of representatives from the scientific community, local and tribal governments, local citizens, and economic, recreational and conservation interests. Through their activities and monthly meetings, MRCs coordinate with diverse partners, support resourceful, action-oriented solutions to marine resources issues, and provide a platform for education and outreach on local issues. MRCs promote effective regional collaboration and citizen involvement in marine resource protection, management, and restoration.

As directed by the Washington State Legislature, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) coordinates and supports MRCs in the five coastal counties through the Coastal MRC Program. Program staff provides grants to MRCs for MRC activities and projects, accounts for MRC activity and deliverables, ensures that MRC activity complements regional priorities, and promotes coordination and strategic partnerships among MRCs, agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and other local groups. The following accomplishments highlight coastal MRC activity over the past year:

- Development of the Coastal Advisory Body through participation in public comment sessions and organizational meetings
- Enhancement of science education through classroom Ocean Literacy Kits, and field trip transportation to marine and estuarine environments on Washington's outer coast
- Completion of numerous coast-wide beach and estuary debris clean-ups
- Completion of facilitated Strategic Planning Sessions in two MRCs
- Initiation of a student involved invasive plant survey conducted by kayak in the Lower Columbia River Estuary
- Outreach events in each county, including a science conference, community potluck and science fair, watershed festival, and a boaters safety workshop
- Promotion of sustainable and handicapped access to marine resource enjoyment through a shoreline trail enhancement
- Enhancement of riparian habitat through native vegetation propagation and plantings
- Organization of the 2nd Annual Washington Coastal MRC Summit sponsored by Surfrider Foundation and The Nature Conservancy
- Scientific investigation through water quality monitoring and reporting, invasive plant surveys, and a genetic analysis of river otter food habits
- Increased direct connection of local residents to non-profit groups and state agencies
- MRC partnerships and representation on the State Ocean Caucus
- Raised general awareness of marine and estuarine issues through MRC-sponsored newspaper publications, presence at local festivals, science-based workshops, creation of educational signs, and other outreach and communication activities

Guided by the Washington Ocean Action Plan, MRC activity will improve scientific knowledge, public understanding, protection and restoration, and management of marine habitats and species and complement ongoing efforts to preserve and enhance coastal and ocean resources.

BACKGROUND

Washington's coastal and ocean resources provide vital economic, recreation, transportation, and cultural benefits to coastal and state residents. Identifying and implementing realistic, effective, and efficient solutions to the unique conservation and management issues of Washington's outer coast requires utilizing the available knowledge and creative approaches of coastal citizens and leaders. Citizen-based MRCs are an effective mechanism to harness the dedication, innovation, and wisdom of coastal residents to complement ongoing efforts to restore, protect, and manage coastal marine resources.

The Nation's coasts have received increased attention in recent years. Washington State responded with the establishment of the Washington-British Columbia Coastal and Ocean Task Force, the Ocean Policy Work Group, and the State Ocean Caucus. The Ocean Policy Work Group completed their work with the publication of the Washington Ocean Action Plan in 2006 and the West Coast Governor's Agreement on Ocean Health was announced in 2008.

The Washington Ocean Action Plan details the status of coastal communities and ocean resources. Coastal resources significantly contribute to Washington's economy, maintain cultural identities, sustain coastal economies and communities, and provide food and opportunities for enjoyment. Existing and new threats to the coastal environment include invasive species, toxic algal blooms, ocean acidification, coastal hazards, habitat loss, water quality, land use, increasing coastal development, climate change, sea level rise, and ocean energy production. In addition, increasing unemployment and changing community population demographics threaten the coastal communities. Washington's Ocean Action Plan also provides recommendations for improving protection and management of the state's ocean resources organized under six topics: 1) marine resource stewardship, 2) coastal vulnerabilities from marine sources, 3) coastal pollution, 4) ocean research and education, 5) sustainable and resilient communities, and 6) governance. MRCs are highlighted in the Plan as a creative and useful governance mechanism to achieve some of these recommendations.

In the 2007 and 2008 legislative sessions, the Washington State Legislature endorsed the MRC approach to local marine resource management and stewardship in the five southern Puget Sound counties and five coastal counties. The Legislature created a new program within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to provide support for the development, administration, and coordination of coastal MRCs and MRC-sponsored projects that benefit coastal and marine resources. The Puget Sound Partnership was directed to facilitate the establishment of the five southern Puget Sound MRCs.

The MRC model was first developed through the Northwest Straits Initiative in 1998. This federally funded program supports MRCs in the seven northern Puget Sound counties and has become a national example of effective regional collaboration and citizen involvement in marine resource protection, management, and restoration. The NW Straits model provided guidance to the Coastal MRC Program during its development, and continues to share lessons learned.

COORDINATION WITH THE NORTHWEST STRAITS COMMISSION

The Northwest Straits (NWS) Commission has expressed solid support of the expansion of the MRC model and of development of MRCs on Washington's Coast. Commission members and Commission staff attended Coastal MRC Work Group meetings and made themselves available to the Coastal MRC Program staff to field questions and convey lessons learned over the past decade. The Coastal MRC Program is stronger and more likely to produce successful outcomes as a result of the Commission's support.

The Northwest Straits Commission hosts an annual MRC training conference to provide an opportunity for MRCs to share ideas and coordinate approaches to marine conservation and protection. At its 2011 training conference (December 2-3, Port Townsend), the Northwest Straits Commission invited the Coastal MRC Program staff and a few MRC members to attend. The North Pacific Coast MRC coordinator was able to attend and represent the program. The NWS Commission and MRC members continue to be supportive of replication of the model and interested in progress made to date.

COORDINATION WITH THE STATE OCEAN CAUCUS

The State Ocean Caucus (SOC) considers local involvement in coastal and ocean management issues, projects, and stewardship initiatives promoted by MRCs to be among its accomplishments. The SOC's predecessor organization, the Ocean Policy Work Group, recommended in its report, Washington Ocean Action Plan, replication of the NWS MRC model on the coast to improve the existing governance structure in order to support improved marine resource management and protection. The SOC continues to receive monthly briefings from Coastal MRC Program staff and MRC SOC representatives on MRC emerging issues and opportunities.

At the fall 2010 MRC Summit, coastal MRC members and state agencies began discussing the need for a coast-wide group. Much of this dialogue was initially focused on the need to organize and prepare for responding to the state's law for marine spatial planning. From January through June 2011, the coastal MRCs organized a series of discussions to outline the purpose and role of a coastal group. State agencies were invited to participate and provide input to this MRC-led process (also referred to as the "Big Chew"). As these conversations evolved, the MRCs eventually developed a consensus recommendation for the State Ocean Caucus on the need to form a coastal stakeholder advisory body, including a draft charter that outlined the purpose, members, and roles. Some key purposes included: 1) advising the State Ocean Caucus, an interagency team of state agencies, on a broad range of ocean policy issues, priorities and activities; and 2) coordinating on and providing local perspectives on, and solutions to, marine resource issues, projects and conflicts.

The State Ocean Caucus, an interagency team of state agencies focused on the coast and ocean policy, determined the best mechanism for responding to this recommendation was to form this group as an advisory group to the State Ocean Caucus. Department of Ecology, as coordinator for the State Ocean Caucus, coordinated the process to officially form the advisory body. With input from MRCs and state agencies, Ecology sought nominations for stakeholder seats in September 2011. Coastal MRC representatives and state agencies then reviewed nominations and provided a consensus recommendation to Ecology's director on the individuals to appoint to stakeholder

seats on the advisory body. In addition, coastal MRCs each have a seat on the advisory body and they self-selected these representatives and their alternates.

In December 2011, Ecology announced the formation of the Coastal Advisory Body and identified the people appointed to serve in stakeholder seats. The first meeting is tentatively planned for February 2012 and Ecology is working with partners to bring on a neutral convener to facilitate the advisory group's quarterly meetings and provide support for meeting logistics and administration.

WASHINGTON'S COASTAL MRC PROGRAM

2011 COASTAL MRC SUMMIT

The 2nd Annual Coastal MRC Summit took place in Forks, WA at the Olympic Natural Resource Center in October. MRC members found the 2010 Summit so useful, a steering committee worked together to develop a strong agenda for the 2011 Summit. Funding for the entire Summit was again generously provided through The Surfrider Foundation and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The purpose of the 2011 Summit was to brainstorm, develop, and evaluate ideas for a collaborative, coast-wide project. Participants came up with many different ideas through facilitated discussions and small group work. Out of the eight proposed project ideas, the group agreed to vote and move forward with the top two ranked projects. Those projects were: 1) Washington's Working Coast (Jobs), whose purpose is to build an understanding of the marine resource based economic engine and seek ways to sustain and expand it, and 2) Washington Coast Marine Debris Assessment and Removal, whose general purpose is to build from existing networks, an understanding of the scope and scale of marine debris issues within Washington's coastal beaches, estuaries and rivers, and ultimately complete a comprehensive removal project. Presentations given at the summit included Oil Spill Response by the USCG, and Coastal Birds by Julia Parish with UW. Participants reported that the Summit was a worthwhile and motivational experience.



WHAT ARE MRCs?

The Coastal MRC Program goal is:

To understand, steward, and restore the marine and estuarine ecological processes of the Washington coast in support of ecosystem health, sustainable marine resource-based livelihoods, cultural integrity, and coastal communities.

Marine Resource Committees (MRCs) are county-based committees that carry out local projects and activities and advise the county on issues pertaining to marine resources. MRCs are formally created and defined by county resolution or ordinance. Counties determine operational procedures and appoint committee members. MRCs are required by statute to be broadly representative of their local communities, although counties have the ability to specify membership or committee focus according to the needs of the county, its citizenry, and marine resources.

Marine Resource Committees are composed of representatives from the scientific community, local and tribal governments, local citizens, and economic, recreational and conservation interests. Each county-based MRC sets local resource priorities and, develops and implements or oversees projects to address those priorities. Through their activities and monthly meetings, MRCs coordinate diverse partners, support resourceful, action-oriented solutions to marine resources issues, and provide a platform for education and outreach on local issues.

The Coastal Marine Resource Committee Program was created within WDFW to implement 2007 and 2008 session law (SSB 6231 and SHB 2049) to provide financial support and technical assistance for the development, administration, and coordination of coastal MRCs. Table 1 summarizes the completed Program budget for the State Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, and the planned Program budget for State Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013.

Table 1. Coastal MRC Budget	FY11	FY12 (Anticipated)	FY13 (Anticipated)
Grant expenditures	\$ 178,094	\$ 192,550	\$ 192,550
Program staff expenditures	\$ 32,775	\$ 34,058	\$ 42,864
Total	\$ 210,869	\$ 226,608	\$ 235,414

WDFW RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS

Through the Coastal MRC Program, the Legislature directed WDFW to carry out the following tasks. Actions completed by WDFW are listed below each task.

Task 1: Allocate programmatic funding for MRC activities and projects

Action: Allocate Program funds to MRCs to support coordination and projects. In FY 2011, \$40,000 was available to each county with an established MRC. In FY 2012, \$38,500 is available to each MRC.

Action: WDFW allocated \$69,837 to Clallam County (7/1/10 – 6/30/11) to support MRC activity in both Western Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

Action: WDFW allocated \$40,000 to Grays Harbor County (7/1/10 – 6/30/11) to support MRC activity.

Action: WDFW allocated \$40,000 to Pacific County (7/1/10 – 6/30/11) to support MRC activity.

Action: WDFW allocated \$38,861 to Wahkiakum County (7/1/10 – 6/30/11) to support MRC activity.

Task 2: Assist MRCs to measure their activities against regional performance benchmarks

Action: Performance benchmarks developed by the Coastal MRC Work Group are used in Table 2 to account for MRC activity.

Action: At the conclusion of each state fiscal year, MRCs are required to report annual activities and projects. To improve future performance, reports include evaluations of both successes and challenges.

Task 3: Support the coordination of MRC projects to complement regional priorities

Action: WDFW and individual MRC representatives report on MRC activity monthly to the State Ocean Caucus, the group charged with overseeing implementation of the Washington Ocean Action Plan. Updates serve to highlight MRC activities, locally-identified issues or opportunities for state managers, and to inform MRC members of state activities on the coast.

Action: Program staff continues to build awareness within WDFW and with other natural resource agencies regarding availability of MRC volunteers for marine resource projects on the coast. Several agency activities have been identified that could benefit from volunteer labor (e.g., supplementing WDFW's ability to protect Snowy Plover nests during critical periods, collection and disposal of derelict fishing nets and crab pots, forage fish surveys, oil spill response surveys, and nature mapping).

Task 4: Coordinate the communication and promote interactions among Coastal MRCs, other similar groups, and with the Northwest Straits Commission on issues of common interest

Action: For the fourth year, WDFW and Coastal MRC representatives were invited to attend the annual Northwest Straits Commission Training Conference to answer questions about MRC activity on the coast, exchange information, and promote collaboration between Coastal and Northwest Straits MRCs.

Action: WDFW and MRC representatives continue to provide briefings on Coastal MRC activity to County Commissioners, Northwest Straits MRCs, and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee when appropriate.

Action: WDFW worked with the State Ocean Caucus to ensure a representative from each MRC was invited to participate in the regular working group. This allowed the opportunity for MRCs to share updates on local MRC issues with state agencies, represent MRC interests and perspectives on State Ocean Caucus activities, participate in the formation and selection of the Coastal Advisory Body, coordinate on shared interests, and communicate key items back to the broader MRC membership.

Action: WDFW continues to maintain a website dedicated to the Coastal MRC Program providing updates and announcements for upcoming activities with links to current individual MRC websites that contain contact information for county based coordinators.

Action: WDFW participated at the 2011 Coastal MRC Summit, providing planning support where needed.

COASTAL MRC PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND BENCHMARKS

In January 2009, the Coastal MRC Program staff worked with the Coastal MRC Work Group, an ad hoc advisory committee to the Coastal MRC Program. This group developed and agreed on interim Program priorities, performance benchmarks, and a program goal statement to guide Coastal MRC activity, ensure coordination with other efforts, and to provide accountability to WDFW and the legislature. Because the Coastal MRC Program Work Group anticipated the need to adjust and adapt the benchmarks and priority statements over time, the group agreed to use the term interim to describe benchmarks and priority statements. These interim benchmark and priority statements were adopted by consensus and will be upheld by the work group until they are amended by group decision in the future. Also, each MRC will need to develop its own local priorities and objectives. The programmatic benchmarks are not intended to restrict the ability of individual counties to carry out activities that may fall outside the existing benchmarks as long as they address the overarching Program goal. The following priorities are used to guide the development of the Coastal MRC Program and focus the work of coastal MRCs; 1) Establish Coastal MRCs, 2) Complement existing efforts, 3) Build partnerships, 4) Utilize Science, and 5) Promote healthy communities and resources. More detail on the priority statements is available on the website and in the previous year's report to the legislature.

Performance benchmarks are used by the Coastal MRC Program to account for MRC activities and achievement in discrete but broad categories. Benchmarks developed and adopted by the Coastal MRC Program include:

1) Marine Habitats: Understand, steward, and restore marine, estuarine, coastal, and nearshore habitats, prevent loss, and achieve a net gain of healthy habitat areas by:

- Enhancing ecosystem and community resilience by protecting and restoring marine and coastal habitats
- Designing and implementing local and regional projects that restore natural processes
- Surveying and mapping marine and estuarine resources to better define physical and biological characteristics of marine habitats
- Making scientifically-based recommendations about management tools to protect marine and estuarine habitats
- Understanding and evaluating erosion and promoting sound sediment management practices

2) Marine Life: Understand, steward, and restore marine and estuarine populations to healthy, sustainable levels by:

- Maintaining the health of marine and estuarine species and preventing further ESA listings while increasing access to marine resource enjoyment and harvest where feasible
- Balancing protection focus on ecosystem versus target species
- Identifying and carrying out actions to protect and restore species of interest and concern
- Designing and implementing projects to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species
- Making scientifically-based recommendations about management tools for species recovery

3) Marine and Fresh Water Quality: Understand, steward, and restore marine and estuarine water quality of Washington's coast and coastal embayments by:

- Conducting or supporting science to fill critical data gaps
- Working to reduce the input of pollutants
- Promoting management actions that would restore degraded water quality and contaminated sediment
- Working with and training students and citizens to conduct water quality monitoring

4) Sound Science: Collect high quality data and promote its transparent presentation, acceptance, and timely dissemination by:

- Utilizing established scientific protocols for the collection, analysis and use of data that support the Coastal MRC Program goal
- Identifying gaps in data and working to fill those gaps by promoting the development of comprehensive, accessible marine resource databases
- Promoting peer reviewed science

5) Education and Outreach: Promote stewardship and understanding of coastal estuarine and marine resources through science-based education and outreach by:

- Informing the public about threats to living resources and coastal communities and presenting them with practical measures they can take to prevent further harm especially regarding land use, erosion control, and individual homeowner decisions
- Informing citizens and governmental agencies about ocean energy activities and associated effects on coastal communities
- Coordinating outreach and education programs with other organizations, including local community colleges, and evaluating their effectiveness
- Engaging the public in active stewardship opportunities through community workshops, restoration projects, and educational programming,
- Translating and disseminating scientific information about the status of Washington's coastal habitats, resources, and communities to regional policy makers, resource managers, and the public in a timely manner
- Expanding partnerships with tribal governments and continuing to foster respect for tribal cultures and treaties
- Striving to maintain and improve coordination and communication among stakeholders and all managers

6) Coastal Communities: Promote sustainable and resilient coastal communities by:

- Supporting sustainable marine resource-based industries
- Supporting cultural and economic integrity of coastal communities
- Encouraging citizen participation in local and governmental decisions regarding marine resources
- Engaging in activities aimed at hazard prevention and preparedness, e.g. education
- Increasing sustainable access to marine resource enjoyment and harvest


COUNTY ACTIVITY AND MRC ACTIVITY BY BENCHMARK

WDFW invited all five counties – Clallam, Jefferson, Pacific, Grays Harbor, and Wahkiakum – to develop MRCs. Following outreach efforts and a series of public scoping meetings beginning in 2008, all of the counties have formed an MRC. Each county received coordination and project funding for 2011.

Coastal MRCs have only been formally established by County action in the past couple of years, and yet they have completed many on-the-ground projects in this amount of time. To date, MRCs have been most active in the benchmark areas of Education and Outreach and Coastal Communities (Table 2), but have developed and completed a number of projects that address the areas of Marine and Fresh Water Quality, Marine Life, Marine Habitats, and Sound Science.

	Marine Habitats	Marine Life	Marine and Fresh Water Quality	Sound Science	Education and Outreach	Coastal Communities
Table 2. MRC Activity by Benchmark						
Clallam/Jefferson County MRC						
Beach garbage clean-up						
Citizen Science Fair and Annual BBQ Potluck						
Marine science field trips for students						
River Otter food habits genetic analysis						
West End MRC newsletter publication						
State Ocean Caucus participation						
Washington MRC Coastal Summit Host						
MRC organization and scoping						
Grays Harbor County MRC						
Water quality monitoring and results reporting						
Community outreach and education events						
Strategic Planning Session						
Chehalis River Basin <i>Drops of Water</i> publication						
Beach and marina garbage clean-ups						
Coastal field trip transportation and classroom assistance						
State Ocean Caucus participation						
MRC organization and scoping						
Pacific County MRC						
Beach garbage clean-ups						
Soil and Water Quality testing and education						
Debris and garbage removal in Willapa Bay						
2011 Science Conference						
MRC Website Development						
Strategic Planning Session						

Field and classroom marine and estuarine education						
Riparian plant restoration						
State Ocean Caucus participation						
MRC organization and scoping						
Wahkiakum County MRC						
Columbia River Plant Surveys and Public Education						
Field trips for marine and estuarine education						
Salmon Habitat Education and Hand's-on Canning Demo						
Shoreline Trail Enhancement and signage						
Propagation of native plants for riparian planting						
Boaters Safety Education						
Community Education and Fishermen Promotion						
Community Workshop for MRC involvement						
State Ocean Caucus participation						
MRC organization and scoping						

 Benchmarks addressed by activity



CLALLAM AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES

Table 3. North Pacific Coast MRC members		
Member	Organization	Representation
Rich Osborne	Clallam County	Coordinator/Facilitator
Tami Pokorny	Jefferson County	Government (Outreach Coordinator)
Steve Allison	Hoh Tribe	Government
Katie Krueger	Quileute Tribe	Government
Jennifer Hagen	Quileute Tribe	Government
Micah McCarty	Makah Tribe	Government
Rod Fleck	City of Forks	Government
John Hunter	Clallam County	Education
Roy Morris	Clallam County	Education/Commercial Fishing
John Richmond	Jefferson County	Citizen
Jill Silver	Jefferson County	Science
Chiggers Stokes	Jefferson County	Citizen
Liam Antrim	Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary	Ex-Officio
Kathy Steichen	Olympic National Park	Ex-Officio

North Pacific Coast Marine Resources Committee (NPC MRC) is the result of an Inter-Local Agreement between both Clallam and Jefferson Counties, allowing the two counties to share the West End MRC staff resources and funding. The current list of committee members (Table 3) shows the diversity of representatives appointed by the County Commissioners. Clallam and Jefferson County citizens and/or the county representatives attended all meetings and related events in 2011. Rich Osborne is the designated coordinator for Clallam County, and Tami Pokorny is the coordinator for Jefferson County.

In 2011, NPC MRC focused its efforts on a variety of projects. All of the program benchmarks were achieved through the completed projects. The Education and Outreach and Coastal Communities benchmark was an integral component and priority for all of the 2011 projects. The MRC provided regular outreach products to the WDFW coordinator to be posted on the WDFW Coastal MRC Program website. In addition, NPC MRC also posted agendas, meeting summaries, Power Points and audio recordings of meetings on the Clallam County website. Monthly advertisements were provided in the Forks Forum to apprise the community of MRC meetings. The semi-annual publication of the *West End Natural Resources News* newsletter and monthly electronic newsletter was created as a regular tool to inform people of recent local accomplishments and projects, and volunteer opportunities in the community. The newsletter was bulk mailed to every mail box and post office box in western Clallam and Jefferson counties to introduce the publication to the community. Other distribution methods such as public information kiosks, libraries, and local newspaper inserts have been utilized in the past and will be considered for the next edition(s).

The main public outreach event was the third annual NPC MRC Potluck/Barbecue and Citizen Science Fair. The event was a success, with seven non-profit groups (Coast Watchers, Stream Keepers, Hoh River Trust, Pacific Coast Salmon Coalition, Feiro Marine Life Center, North Olympic Land Trust, and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary) in attendance. The participants worked to develop volunteer strategies for the West End community, and look forward to engaging more people in 2012.

In addition to basic coordination of the MRC, NPC worked hard to stay coordinated on the coast-wide level. As a member of the SOC, representatives for the MRC ensured consistent communication and participation on ocean policy issues and important decision making processes. Committee members also participated in the Coastal MRC Summit (as the hosting county), four Marine Spatial Planning / Coastal Partnership formation meetings in Aberdeen, most of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee meetings, a West Coast Governor's Agreement on Ocean Health meeting, a National Ocean Council Listening Session, and a coordinator's meeting in Montesano.

2011 was the third year NPC MRC contributed project funds to the Ocean Science Program that is jointly undertaken by Feiro Marine Life Center, the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, and the Seattle Aquarium. NPC MRC's contribution specifically targeted the expenses of getting the students from Clallam and Jefferson's outer coast schools to be able to participate in this regionally acclaimed program, and to undertake the field trips to Feiro Marine Life Center that are such a critical component of the educational experience. The success of this program in supporting



the NPC MRC's commitment to promoting ocean literacy has led the committee to decide to annually allocate a portion of project funding to this program so that it can become a standard component of the educational systems in our outer coast schools, and build on the continuity it provides for students as they progress through the school system.



NPC MRC also dedicated funding and volunteers for the third year to the North Pacific Coast component of the annual Washington Coast Cleanup orchestrated by Washington Coast Savers. Eight members of the NPC MRC committee participated in the April clean up, along with 1,150 others. A web link to the Coast Savers website results on this year's cleanup is <http://www.coastsavers.org/index.html>. NPC MRC has voted to include a portion of its annual project funds for coast cleanup activities, and will work with other local partners such as the tribes, Olympic National Park, and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to ensure the annual spring cleanup on the Olympic Coast continues.

The NPC project that focused on the Sound Science benchmark was the river otter food habits. It was a follow up from the previous year's project where fish remains, from eight years of river otter scat collection in the Ozette River area between Lake Ozette and the coast, were analyzed and identified to fish genus. This project performed a genetic analysis of those salmonid remains to determine if threatened Lake Ozette Sockeye or if Coho are the river otter's primary salmonid diet. All work was performed in June, but the final results are still being worked up for the peer-reviewed publication in preparation for submission in September. The final publication will be posted on the Coastal MRC Program Website.

Work completed by the MRC in the new contract through October 31, 2011 included the development of a new project application and review procedures for the RFP, as well as progress on a NPC MRC Strategic Plan containing an approved mission and vision statement.

The NPC MRC developed a list of recommended priority actions for 2012. The committee agreed to allocate specific annual project funds to on-going core priorities of the committee, independent of the public request for project proposals. The three core priority areas identified for 2012 are marine/ocean literacy for K-12, coastal marine debris cleanup, and ongoing community outreach. The release of the public RFP for 2012 projects took place on October 17, 2011, advertising a closing date for submission on December 5, 2011. Final ranking of the project proposals and work plan is anticipated to take place at the January 18, 2012 monthly meeting, allowing submission of the final work plan by January 31, 2012.

Another priority action is further development of the Strategic Plan. The committee's next step is to identify areas of interest, concern, and opportunity and develop a set of local benchmarks to address them. The second project solicitation and review for the 2013 work plan will run from March through May 2012. The MRC also plans to follow up from the 2011 Coastal Summit by pursuing the development of 1-2 coast wide projects with the other coastal MRCs. In the early part of 2012, the NPC MRC will also solicit articles for its next issue of the West End Natural Resource News that is currently projected to mail in February 2012.



GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY

Table 4. Grays Harbor MRC members		
Member	Organization	Representation
Garrett Dalan	Grays Harbor County	Coordinator
Bob Burkle	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Scientific Interest
Eric Delvin	The Nature Conservancy	Conservation and Environmental Interests
Kathy Greer	Surfrider Foundation	Recreational Interests
Harv Lillegard	Olympia Master Builders	Economic Interests
Joe Schumacker	Quinault Indian Nation	Tribal Interests
Robin Leraas	Port of Grays Harbor	Local Government Interests
Arthur "RD" Grunbaum	Citizen	Local Citizen Interests
Ray Toste	Washington Dungeness Crab Fisherman's Assoc.	Commercial Fishing Interests
Heidi Happonen	Ocean Companies	Economic/Commercial Fishing Interests
Birdie Davenport	Washington Department of Natural Resources	State Interests
Lorena Marchant	Grays Harbor College	Educational Interests
Mark Plackett	Ocean Shores Citizen	Local Citizen Interests
Mike Sanderson	Westport Charterboat Association	Fishing Interests
OPEN		Recreational Fishing Interests
OPEN		Aquaculture Interests

Grays Harbor County Marine Resources Committee (GHC MRC) was the first of the Coastal counties to establish an MRC by county resolution in 2009. The current list of representatives on the advisory committee appointed by the County Commissioners can be seen in Table 4. Garrett Dalan serves as the MRC coordinator for GHC MRC.

In 2011, the MRC focused its efforts on State Ocean Caucus representation, water quality planning and assessment, strategic planning, education and outreach activities, and a Beach Recycling and Marina Day. GHC maintained its website regularly to inform the public with relevant project and meeting information.

The MRC representatives were able to participate in all of the SOC meetings throughout the year, and in addition provided input and support for the group process that came about for the Coastal Advisory Body. The MRC has always done a great job of coordinating with local marine resource related groups, and has made it a priority to work on projects and coordinate on a coast-wide level.

GHC MRC's 2010 assembled Ocean Literacy Kits were loaned out to at least four schools during 2011 where they were shared by multiple teachers. At the end of the year, teachers requested additional items and the MRC provided them to the different kits based on education level. The twelve enhancements included books, DVDs, observation boxes, plankton collection nets, and pocket magnifiers. The MRC effort was to make the kits more beneficial and desirable for teachers in the future. GHC MRC's participation in the watershed festival, FIN in school and transportation grants combined with the Ocean Literacy Kits has made a wonderful marine

education impact in the local schools. The MRC also funded sign updates to two; six-sign sets to enhance public education and marina visitors.

GHC MRC funded field trip transportation mini-grants for the second year in a row. This enabled Grays Harbor County teachers to take their classes to local marine and estuarine environments and have hands on learning experiences. Through this MRC funded program, over 47 teachers and 875 students ranging from 3rd to 11th grades participated in these field trips.



Throughout 2011, the MRC provided funding for the Coastal Learning Center to fund two half-time AmeriCorps volunteers, Kim Jones and Jessica James, for the school year. Over the ten month period, the volunteers assisted in many roles for the MRC including coordination of the Ocean Literacy Kits and Transportation mini-grants, note taking for multiple meetings, and participation at outreach events.

The MRC participated in beach recycling by partnering with Ocean Companies to host and promote a recycling portion of the Earth day beach clean ups. Future ideas for increasing awareness about beach waste and clean ups includes potentially making some of the unique waste



into an art sculpture. In addition, the MRC partnered with the Chehalis Basin Stream Team to fund and volunteer for a beach cleanup at Westhaven State Park. The MRC also sponsored a Marina Day event at the Westport Museum for elementary school students.

Water quality monitoring data collection began during the exploratory phase of the GHC MRC. Working in cooperation with the Pacific Shellfish Institute, GHC MRC board members and volunteers have continued to collect weekly samples, at different points through the year, from the north and south sides of Grays Harbor County. Collected data is focused on harmful algal blooms and ocean acidification. The final reports for 2009 and 2010 are available on the GHC MRC website. After losing a committed volunteer, only a few samples were collected in 2011. The effort of collection requires over four hours each collection day, and the MRC hopes to fill this gap to continue the important sound science. With MRC funds, a new Beta Plus 2.2 Liter collection bottle was purchased to provide more accurate marine water sampling for DO and CO₂. The bottle is designed to collect water from a chosen depth in the water column without influence from other water during retrieval.

Ready to better address defining the long term needs and scope of the MRC, committee members planned and carried out a facilitated strategic planning session for May 2011. Through the day long planning session facilitated by Ray Ledgerwood, the MRC came up with a vision for accomplishments through 2016, strategic priorities, a draft mission statement, and specific benchmarks, timelines and actions. The MRC and participants came away with a report, available on the website, describing all of the results of the session that can be used to shape the actions and prioritization of projects in the future.

The GHC MRC developed a list of recommended priority actions for 2012. The MRC plans to continue providing funding for field trip transportation for students to local beaches and marine environments. This, combined with the Ocean Kits, create great opportunity for education and awareness of the local marine resources. The MRC has shown interest in continuing the long term strategic planning that was first developed during 2011. The MRC also plans to continue its strong participation in the Chehalis Watershed Festival. The GHC MRC will work to position itself, and other Coastal MRCs, to be a strong, local voice in the development and implementation of the Coastal Marine Spatial Planning. This may include working with legislators and the Governor's Office, participation in the State Ocean Caucus, hosting workshops and direct planning participation. The MRC has also offered the Quinault Indian Nation a letter of support and dedicated direct and in-kind funding to a project, which if the grant is approved, will result in abandoned gear clean up in the Chehalis and Quinault Rivers and a survey of pilings in Grays Harbor. Lastly, water quality monitoring, focusing on ocean acidification, harmful algal blooms and vibrio, has and continues to be a priority project of the GHC MRC. Partnering with Pacific Shellfish Institute, the MRC hopes to establish strong baseline data to help protect, maintain and best use its marine resources now and in the future.



PACIFIC COUNTY

PCMRC Mission Statement:

"The Pacific County Marine Resource Committee serves as a steward for the marine and estuarine resources in our county by facilitating science based policies, research, and education that enhance the sustainability of the economy and ecology of our communities."

Table 5. Pacific County MRC members		
Member	Representation	Alternate
Faith Taylor-Eldred	Local Government	Mike Nordin
Doug Kess	Local Citizens	Key McMurry
Ross Barkhurst	Recreational Groups	Michael Spencer
Cathy Russ	Economic Groups	Dan Todd
Ammie Ammer	Conservation/Environmental Groups	Mike Johnson
Kim Patten	Scientific Community	Tom Kollacsh
Mike McGinniss	Tribal Governments	Ray Gardner
Time Morris	Aquaculture	Dave Nisbet
Dale Beasley	Commercial Fishing	Dwight Eager
Will Greene	Cities	Steve Russell
Julie Tennis	State/Federal Government	Rob Allen
Steve Harbell	Education	Boyd Keyser
Sue Pattillo	Agriculture	Allen "Jim" Goulter
Jim Neva	Ports	Mary DeLong

Pacific County Marine Resource Committee (PCMRC) is made up of 28 dedicated individuals (seats and alternates) appointed by Pacific County Commissioners, representing a wide variety of interests, as seen in (Table 5). Coordination of the MRC is subcontracted to the Pacific Conservation District, with Mike Johnson as the MRC coordinator. The MRC accomplished a great deal of work in 2011; focusing on assisting the region in the future formation of a collaborative coast-wide MRC partnership, holding its first long range planning session, creating bylaws, and completing a number of successful projects.

For the second year, the PCMRC supported and participated in three beach cleanup events, taking place in January, April, and July 5th. The MRC provided funding for the advertisements, garbage bags, and the disposal fees for the events. These events continue to bring many committed volunteers from the local communities to share in the cleanup of local beaches.



MRC representatives participated in all of the SOC meetings and related planning meetings and events, which were focused on Marine Spatial Planning. The PCMRC was also involved in all meetings related to the formation of the Coastal Advisory Body.

The MRC provided strong support in funding the Willapa Bay Cleanup team in 2011. The group made twenty trips totaling one hundred and twenty hours. The group targeted over seven sites in Pacific county, collecting about 1,800 cubic feet of debris, not including additional pick up points above the tide line. The debris included a large amount of polystyrene Styrofoam, seasoned tires, discarded cans and bottles, storage lids and bins, and shotgun shell casings. Other interesting items were a computer found in a tree and a pet carrier. Some of the ideas the MRC came up with to prevent litter accumulations were to educate commercial and recreational users about cleaning up after their visit to Willapa Bay, fix or remove docks in disrepair, and create a refuse hotline.



PCMRC prioritized education and outreach as a main component for projects in 2011. The MRC funded multiple schools for a variety of different projects. The School to River program, funded by the MRC for its second year, focused on the Naselle River with the students from Naselle High School. The MRC funding paid for fieldtrip transportation, field and classroom education, community newsletters, and supplies for three acres of riparian plantings. The Willapa Valley High School Chemical Composition Study project provided the high school's chemistry class with soil and water quality kits, as well as bus transportation to fieldtrip sites. This funding allowed the students to test and research local water quality issues, and report on those during classroom presentations. The Willapa Bay Water Quality Indicators Project, conducted by the South Bend School District paid for field trips to the South Bend boat launch and the Bay Center to make observations and test the water quality. Lastly, the MRC also funded fieldtrip transportation for

the Ilwaco Middle School. Two fieldtrips allowed 150 students to experience the Long Beach Water treatment plant, the Nahcotta Fish and Wildlife site, Black Lake and Fort Columbia.

PCMRC conducted its second annual science conference on May 19th, called the 2011 Coastal Summit: Your Coastal System. The summit proved to be a success with over 60 people in attendance. The information provided by the presenters was well received and very informative. Presentations included topics on Implementation of Regional Sediment Management at the Mouth of the Columbia River, Ten Years on the Shoalwater Bay, Discovering the Ecology of Our Estuary, Japanese Eelgrass – Friend or Foe, Attractants and Repellants of Oyster Drills, Overview of NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center, Point Adams Biological Research Station: Salmon Biology & Recovery and Present & Past Ocean/Estuarine Conditions, and Marine Spatial Planning. An informative exit survey provided the necessary information to enhance the 2012 summit with the topics of interest.

The PCMRC held its first long range strategic planning session, facilitated by Ray Ledgerwood, on January 13, 2011. The outcome of the full day session was a solid long range plan and guideline for PCMRC for the next five years. The PCMRC Board plans to set up a subcommittee to keep the PCMRC focused on the plan from year to year. The full report from the meeting is available on the MRC website.



To aid in the outreach efforts of the MRC, the committee decided to dedicate funds to develop and maintain a website for the MRC to host information materials. The MRC entered into a contract agreement to create the website. Topics and the format of the website are available in the annual PCMRC report. The PCMRC Board agreed to continue the web page and annual maintenance fees.

PCMRC developed seven recommended priority actions for 2012: 1) SOC participation 2) continuation of beach cleanups and Willapa Bay cleanup, 3) education and outreach activities through Stewards Of Our Peninsula and the Ilwaco School District, 4) a 2012 Coastal Science Summit, 5) website maintenance 6) a new Willapa Bay Creosote Piling Survey, and 7) a new media blitz project.



WAHKIAKUM COUNTY

Table 6. Wahkiakum County MRC members		
Member	Organization	Representation
Carrie Backman	WSU Wahkiakum County Extension	MRC Coordinator
Donna Westlind	WSU Wahkiakum County Extension	MRC Assistant Coordinator
George Wehrfritz	Mayor, Town of Cathlamet	Local Government
Abe York	Wahkiakum Port District 1	Local Government
Kayrene Gilbertsen	Wahkiakum Port District 2	Local Government
Carol Ervest	Citizen	Local Resident
George Exum	Citizen	Local Resident
Joel David	US Fish & Wildlife Service	Scientific Expert
Rob Stockhouse	Botanist	Scientific Expert
Pat Frazier	WA Department of Fish and Wildlife	Scientific Expert
Mike Backman	Commercial Fisherman	Economic Interests
Mike Clark	Commercial Fisherman	Economic Interests
Kent Martin	Commercial Fisherman	Economic Interests
Andrew Emlen	Columbia River Kayaking	Recreational Interests
Jeff Rooklidge	Wahkiakum School District	Environmental and Conservation Interests
Jim Moten	Naselle-Grays River Valley School District	Environmental and Conservation Interests
Dave Wahlstrom	Retired Commercial Fisherman	Alternate - Economic Interests
Debbie Denny	Naselle-Grays River Valley School District	Alternate - Recreational Interests
Mark Whitaker	Citizen	Alternate - Recreational Interests

Wahkiakum County completed its first full year as an official MRC in 2011. The county worked with Washington State University Wahkiakum County Extension to host the MRC, and appoint a coordinator, Carrie Backman, and an assistant coordinator, Donna Westlind. In its first year, the MRC completed many unique and important projects. Through a facilitated session during the winter, Wahkiakum MRC board members identified local benchmarks to rank projects to reflect both the Ocean Action Plan and local priorities. A couple examples of these benchmarks are project cost, probability of project success, and taking into account if the project contributes to the economic health of the community. The 2011 project proposals were ranked and selected based on their reflection of these benchmarks. These included a MRC Open House Workshop, State Ocean Caucus participation, a boater's safety workshop and fisherman promotion, student participation in native plan propagation and field trips, demonstration of salmon processing, and a shoreline trail enhancement for handicapped accessibility and trail signage.

The Open House and workshop held in November 2010 and January 2011 were successes. Both events were facilitated and included potential MRC members. These events identified and confirmed committee members and project priorities, and worked to create a proposal

solicitation strategy and benchmarks from which to rank proposals. Altogether, this work created a work plan for the committee through June 30, 2011.

The MRC Coordinator attended all but two SOC meetings during 2011. The coordinator attended meetings to present the MRC interests and perspectives, share updates on local issues and activities, as well as communicate back to the MRC the broader coast wide coordination issues discussed at the meetings. In 2012, the SOC participation will be expanded to one or two other representatives from the MRC.

The MRC funded three school based education projects. Columbia River Invasive Plant Survey and Public Education project worked with Wahkiakum High School students and a kayak guiding company to survey invasive weeds on the islands and shoreline in the Lower Columbia River Estuary. The MRC supported student transportation, kayak rentals, and printed materials on invasive weeds for the community. The Salmon Education/Habitat/Procession Program was an interactive learning experience for students at Wahkiakum High School as they were trained to can and smoke salmon by 4-H leaders and volunteers. The youth and volunteers who participated in the program plan to mentor other



classes how to process fish using the skill set learned in during this project. The Propagation of Native Plants for Riparian Planting and Fish Education project supported the Naselle Grays River School students as they raised and planted native plants for marine and estuary habitat restoration. Project funds purchased plant soil, rain suits, waders, rubber boots, and CREST staff time. From all of the school based projects, the teachers responded with gratitude for the funding provided to their students learning.

Wahkiakum MRC also worked on and provided funds for community outreach projects. The Fishermen Promotion project supported a booth set up at the Farmer's Market with a TV and DVD player showing a DVD on commercial fishing.

Pictures were taken of attendees painting a salmon to make a print to take home. The booth proved to be successful at engaging fishermen in communication as several people asked questions regarding how fish are selectively harvested with tangle nets and recovery boxes. The commercial fishermen also educated people on why fishermen work to selectively harvest hatchery fish, and the stiff consequences fishermen face for not correctly using the tangle nets or recovery boxes. The MRC partnered with the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Elochoman Slough marina on March 19, 2011 to answer boating related questions and administer ten vessel safety checks for the Boaters Safety project. The vessel safety check consisted of looking at the following items: registration, lights, life jackets, fire extinguishers, distress signals, ventilation, fuel systems, anchor, alternate propulsion, de-watering device, electrical system, sewage system, and

navigation rules. The results were only reported to the boat owner and were intended only to inform the owner of any required items aboard or missing from the vessel. The MRC also used funds to purchase lifejackets for boaters to use at the marina.

Wahkiakum MRC spent a portion of their funds on the Shoreline Trail Enhancement and Signage project. These funds were used to extend an uncompleted trail, providing handicapped access to view the Columbia River down to the Astoria Bridge. The project included the clearing and cleaning of an upper trail running along the river bank, as well as creating signage to describe river activity and the native plants found in Vista Park. The lower trail was extended, graveled, and asphalted to allow wheelchair accessibility. Three large signs were created and installed on the beach front, written by a local historian depicting Columbia River commerce, industry and recreation. The project was completed with 57 hours of volunteer work.



The MRC developed a list of priority actions for 2012. The MRC will continue its participation at the SOC, and recommends the following actions; a Columbia River Fisheries Exhibit, a Fish Preservation Workshop, Fish Hatchery Tours and Job Shadowing, Handicapped Trail Completion and Invasive Species Information, Marine Resource Monitoring and Education, Invasive Species Signage, School District Field Trips, and a Skamokawa Creek Dredging Assessment.

CONCLUSION

Now in its fourth full year of operation, the Coastal MRC Program is well established and enjoys strong support from coastal counties, federal and state natural resource agencies, citizens, and industry and conservation groups. These entities and the MRCs themselves are well aware that in tight budget times, relatively small grants to local MRCs are a cost effective way to ensure that marine resources are well managed, protected, and, where necessary, restored. Providing local groups with funding to support their top priorities sends a powerful message of trust and value in local communities. The carefully crafted parameters of the Coastal MRC Program provide assurance to WDFW and the Legislature that MRCs will contribute to improved stewardship of coastal resources. Through minimal funding for MRC coordinators, the Coastal MRC Program provides essential support to local jurisdictions to continue promoting conservation of marine resources. County-based MRC coordinators report good attendance at meetings and enthusiasm for the flexibility offered by the MRC model. In this way, MRCs provide a positive outlet for citizens to contribute to making their communities a better place to live and work in the ways they choose.

The main programmatic challenge is the slow pace of allocating project funds and carrying out projects. This pace reflects the need to develop and come to agreement on how to spend funds at the local level, as well as the logistical challenges of executing contractual agreements between WDFW and counties for carrying out MRC defined deliverables. MRCs have actively been working to improve this issue by beginning the process of project solicitation and work plan development earlier in the year. Another challenge is gathering optimal participation from committee volunteers on projects. Over time, better scope and timing of work should allow volunteers to more actively take charge of leading projects. Other project specific issues and recommendations are noted in the individual MRC reports, available on the website.

Future coastal MRC work is dependent on continued funding at or above the current level. MRCs are providing a vehicle for community visioning and consensus building, supporting coastal resource based communities, improving access to marine resources, filling science gaps, improving education, and preventing future resource degradation. MRCs also provide a direct connection between coastal residents and state policy and management related to ocean resources. WDFW is pleased to continue supporting the work of coastal counties and looks forward to working with citizens and local entities to continue building the Coastal MRC Program. In conclusion, Coastal MRCs provide a non-regulatory mechanism to discuss and develop solutions for issues facing coastal resources and communities, help promote healthy coastal communities through improved infrastructure and sustainable practices relating to marine resources, and complement and support ongoing efforts to improve scientific knowledge, public understanding, conservation and restoration, and management of marine resources.

For additional supporting materials, reports, documents and links to individual MRC websites mentioned in this report visit the Coastal MRC Program Website:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/mrc/>

